

John Birch 'Antis' Point Unwelcome Spotlight

By James E. Clayton
Magazine Editor

THREE MONTHS AGO, the John Birch Society had been heard of only in a few scattered areas of the country. Its desire to operate quietly and behind the scenes was generally being fulfilled.

But almost overnight, the Society has become an organization of national interest. Newspapers on both coasts have denounced it. Two United States Senators have spoken against it on the Senate floor. Former Vice President Nixon has joined the protests. Time magazine has given the Society a critical analysis.

The Society has attracted this attention because of:

- Its strong views on many topics. It thinks that everything from increased spending for defense to Federal aid to education is part of a Communist plot.

- The attacks made by its leader, Robert Welch, on the loyalty of America's leaders. These include former President Eisenhower, Chief Justice Warren, former Secretary of State Dulles and CIA director Allen Dulles, all of whom Welch says are Communist agents or sympathizers.

- The secrecy which surrounds the Society and the amount of money which it apparently has to spend.

Conservative Complaints

TWO WEEKS AGO, the Los Angeles Times, a conservative newspaper, said editorially: "If the John Birchers follow the program of their leader, they will bring our institutions into

attack has been mounted against Sen. Mike Mansfield, a liberal Democrat from Montana, and Sen. Thomas C. Kuchel, a liberal Republican from California. The attack against Kuchel and Young has been particularly vigorous, apparently because they are up for re-election in 1962.

But not a great deal is known here about the Society. It has not been particularly active in the Washington area although it apparently has at least one chapter here. Sen. Mansfield said that he had been unable to find out much about it although he tried to get information from "various committees (on Capitol Hill) or the agencies downtown."

On March 20, the United Press International reported that the Senate Internal Security Subcommittee is talking to members that the Society seems to be, from our records, a patriotic organization." The Los Angeles Times, however, implied that the group was subversive—from the right instead of from the left.

Last Tuesday, Rep. L. Mendel Rivers (D-S. C.) came to the Society's defense. It is a "Nation-wide organization of patriotic Americans," he said in a statement in the Congressional Record. The source of the charges which smear the organization, he said, is a publication of the Communist Party.

This is a report on the Society and what it believes and does.

The Founding Deceit

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operating under "complete authoritarian control at all levels." A republican form of government or organization has advantages, the book says, under favorable circumstances. "But under less happy circumstances," it goes on, "it lends itself too readily to infiltration, distortion and disruption. And democracy, of course, in government or organization, as the Greeks and Romans both found out, and as I believe every man in this room recognizes—democracy is merely a deceptive phrase, a weapon of demagoguery and a perennial fraud."

Newspapers which have written about the Society have quoted these statements to show that it is ruled by Welch and is opposed to democracy.

In a letter printed in the Congressional Record last week, Robert D. Love, a Wichita businessman and Society member, said, "These statements have been pulled completely out of context and made to smear something which could help to inform people of the true dangers of communism."

'Believe in Me'

WELCH ALSO told the Indianapolis meeting that those who join the Society "are going to be doing so primarily because they believe in me and what I am doing and are willing to accept my leadership. And we are going to see that loyalty, like any other resource, is the fullest possible advantage that we can... Those members who seem to feel the necessary degree of loyalty can either resign or will be

WELCH said then that he hoped to

By Robert Knott

Of Public Education

The Never-Ending Lullaby